



merSETA

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING
AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

merSETA: PRESS RELEASE

Attention: Business Editors; Education and Training Editors; Labour Editors

For immediate release:

merSETA and Mercedes-Benz SA commit launch Boksburg Training Project

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA), Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA) and St Anthony's Education Training Centre in Boksburg have launched a three-year training programme in the auto industry.

The three-year pilot programme is aimed at providing NQF level three qualifications for an initial intake of 24 learners. The spend project is split 60:40, with the merSETA earmarking R2.4 million in the next three years, and St Anthony providing the training competence for the theoretical part of the programme.

MBSA have enlisted the assistance of their dealer network, which comprises 87 dealerships across the country, to expose learners to the workplace and provide on-the-job training.



Each learner will have the opportunity to be mentored by a dealership for four months. During this time they will complete their portfolio of evidence for their final assessments.

Speaking at the launch, merSETA CEO Dr Raymond Patel said the launch of the technical learnership programme is in line with the merSETA's mission. "We aim to increase access to high quality and relevant skills development and training opportunities to support economic growth," explained Dr Patel.

"We need thousands more artisans to satisfy the critical and scarce skills uptake. But having artisans to fill the need is not the only solution. We also need massive transformation across the South African economy.

"This is crucial if we are to avert another catastrophe arising out of youth unemployment. This unemployment is particularly acute among those aged between 18 and 25, whose prospects for a better life dissipate everyday as they are buffeted by the ill-winds of the economic downturn".

Dr Patel added that the course of merSETA is to develop black skills, especially for artisans and professionals, also to change the demographic profile of managers in the sector. He went further to say this is a key consideration in the overall transformation of the sector.

"We must deepen the changes in our society. The merSETA has positioned itself as the leading SETA for the development of artisan skills".

MBSA Divisional Manager for Group Corporate Affairs, Mrs Nobuzwe Mangcu, said the company shares the concern and commitment of the government to educate and upskill the youth.

"We want to focus on a sound skills base and a pipeline of technically-skilled individuals. The automotive industry is strongly driven by technological advancement, and we have a severe shortage of technical skills," concluded Mrs Mangcu.



MBSA has trained about 10 000 artisans since the launch of its technical and vocational training scheme about 33 years ago, whilst the merSETA has trainedartisans since the establishment of SETAs in 2001.

The merSETA sector has about 50 000 firms with about 655 967 employees. The manufacturing sector provides employment for about 1.735 million or 13.2% of the total employed population.

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